

EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE IN NORTH CAROLINA

Excessive alcohol use is the **third** leading **preventable** cause of death in North Carolina.

In 2021, there were **over 6,300** deaths due to excessive alcohol use in North Carolina.

90% of excessive drinkers are **not** alcohol dependent. Excessive drinking is associated with injuries, violence, and chronic conditions like stroke, hypertension, and some cancers.



– 2021 State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics, Death Certificate Data, and CDC Alcohol Fact Sheets

EXAMPLES OF EXCESSIVE DRINKING

FOR WOMEN

HEAVY DRINKING: Consuming **8** or more drinks per week

BINGE DRINKING: Consuming **4 or more** drinks on an occasion

FOR MEN

HEAVY DRINKING: Consuming **15** or more drinks per week

BINGE DRINKING: Consuming **5 or more** drinks on an occasion

Any alcohol consumed by **pregnant persons** and those **under age 21**.

– CDC Alcohol Fact Sheets

The **top 5 alcohol-related fatal injuries** in North Carolina are **poisonings, motor vehicle traffic crashes, suicides, homicides, and fall injuries**.

– 2021 State Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics, Death Certificate Data



In 2021, **25%** of all traffic fatalities in North Carolina were alcohol related.

– NC DOT 2021 Crash Facts

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE EXCESSIVE DRINKING:

CONTROL SYSTEM: Maintain state control of alcohol sales and avoid privatization of retail alcohol sales.

MAINTAIN COMMERCIAL HOST LIABILITY LAWS: These laws permit retail establishments to be held liable for injuries or harms caused by illegal service to intoxicated or underage customers.

INCREASE ALCOHOL TAXES: Increase the price of alcohol by raising alcohol taxes.

REGULATE ALCOHOL OUTLET DENSITY: Continue to limit the number of businesses selling and distributing alcohol in neighborhoods.

INCREASE ELECTRONIC SCREENING AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS: Electronically screen every adult for excessive drinking using validated questions, have a brief conversation with those that screen positive.

CONTINUE TO LIMIT THE DAYS AND HOURS ALCOHOL SALES OCCUR: Maintain or decrease days and hours that alcohol is sold.



In NC, **19%** of high school students said they are currently drinking alcohol. Of those high school students who drink, **50%** binge drink, **36%** usually drink liquor, and **43%** usually obtained alcohol through someone, such as family or friends, giving it to them versus buying it themselves.

– 2021 NC Youth Risk Behavior Survey



In NC, **half** of adults are current drinkers. **11%** of current drinkers said they heavily drink. **29%** of current drinkers said they binge drink at least once a month.

– 2021 NC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System



Excessive alcohol use cost NC **roughly \$9.7 billion** in 2017.

– 2017 Gora Combs et al. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35504714/>

For more information please see: **The Community Guide**
www.thecommunityguide.org/topic/excessive-alcohol-consumption



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